

Claims

1. A method of tandem communication between at least a first portion of a network suitable for voice communications and a second portion of a network suitable for voice communications,
5 characterised by the step of;
applying a common data format to an encoded signal, the encoded signal produced by a codec of the first portion of a network (hereinafter 'first codec'), and wherein;
10 upon application the common data format comprises quantised parameters of the encoded signal produced by the first codec and descriptors characterising the coding scheme of the first codec.
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2. A method according to claim 1 wherein the first portion of a network suitable for voice communications and the second portion of a network suitable for voice communications are part of the same overall network.
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3. A method according to any one of claims 1 and 2 wherein any or all of the following set of coding scheme characteristics are described in accordance with the common data format;
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- i. Type of quantisation format for linear predictive coding (LPC) sets;
 - ii. number of LPC sets quantised per frame;
 - 30 iii. the order of the LPC
 - iv. number of LPC interpolations per frame;

- v. type of interpolation rules for the LPCs;
 - vi. number of sub-frames per frame for LTP updates;
 - vii. number of sub-frames per frame for codebook updates;
 - viii. type of pitch sharpening present, if any; and
 - ix. type of codebook encoding format.
4. A method according to any one of the preceding claims wherein any or all of the following set of encoded signal parameters are quantised in accordance with to the common data format;
- i. LPC vector;
 - ii. lag durations;
 - iii. LTP gain;
 - iv. pitch sharpening coefficient;
 - v. fixed codebook components; and
 - vi. codebook gains.
5. A method according to any one of the preceding claims, further comprising the step of;
- transmitting the common data format representation of the encoded signal to a second network via a wired link.
6. A method according to claim 5 wherein the wired link is part of a public switched telephone network.
7. A method according to claim 5 wherein the wired link is part of a packet switched network.

8. A method of tandem communication between at least a first portion of a network suitable for voice communications and a second portion of a network suitable for voice communications,
5 characterised by the step of;
translating a common data format representation of an encoded signal produced by a codec of a first portion of a network into an encoded signal compatible with a codec of the second portion of a
10 network (hereinafter 'second codec').
9. A method according to claim 8 wherein the first portion of a network suitable for voice communications and the second portion of a network
15 suitable for voice communications are part of the same overall network.
10. A method according to any one of claims 8 and 9 wherein if the second codec is the same as the first
20 codec, the step of translation comprises dequantising the common data format representation and substantially reconstituting the original encoded signal.
- 25 11. A method according to any one of claims 8 and 9 wherein if the second codec is different to the first codec, the step of translation comprises dequantising the common compressed voice format representation and applying a conversion algorithm to convert components
30 of the encoded signal produced by the first codec into components compatible with the second codec.

12. Apparatus for tandem communication between at least a first portion of a network suitable for voice communications and a second portion of a network suitable for voice communications according to a method as claimed in any one of claims 1 to 7, and comprising;

application means to apply a common data format to an encoded signal, the encoded signal produced by a codec of the first portion of a network (hereinafter 'first codec'), and wherein;

the common data format comprises quantised parameters of the encoded signal produced by the first codec and descriptors characterising the coding scheme of the first codec.

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13. Apparatus for tandem communication between at least a first portion of a network suitable for voice communications and a second portion of a network suitable for voice communications according to a method as claimed in any one of claims 8 to 11, and comprising;

translation means for translating a common data format representation of an encoded signal into an encoded signal compatible with a codec of the second portion of a network.

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14. A method according to claim 1 and substantially as hereinbefore described with reference to the accompanying drawings.

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15. A method according to claim 8 and substantially as hereinbefore described with reference to the accompanying drawings.

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